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ABSTRACT

This brochure describes the varied programs of the American Bar Association's Public Education Division. The Division offers communities throughout the country Law-Related Education (LRE) and civic education programs for all age groups. The brochure describes how the Public Education Division can provide people with information about the law, helping them develop the skills, attitudes, and values needed to be responsible and participating citizens. Included are descriptions of the materials in the National Resource Center and the activities and publications of the Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship (for elementary and secondary LRE), the Commission on College and University Legal Studies, and the Commission on Public Understanding about the Law (for adult LRE). (LH)

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**Commission on Public Understanding About the Law**
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**Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship**
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# A CALL TO ACTION

***"If we are to remain dedicated to the peaceful resolution of disputes and to a government based upon a fair and equitable system of laws, we must assign the highest priority to making public understanding of the law a reality."***

**—Morris Harrell, ABA President, 1982–83**

In an ideal America, all people would participate fully in the democratic process and live successfully under our laws. Yet too often we respond to crisis with powerlessness, apathy, or—even worse—violence. Today's America is a troubled America. What can we do to help reverse this alarming trend?

While theories abound as to the causes and cures of our nation's problems, one successful intervention is already in place: a nationwide network with a vigorous educational outreach program to inform all Americans about our legal system and its benefits.

The American Bar Association's Division for Public Education is dedicated to helping people understand how citizens sustain the rule of law in our democratic system. As the hub of the ABA's public education efforts, we offer communities throughout the country law-related/civic education programs for all age groups.

Now, in an effort to reach more people than ever before, the Division for Public Education is actively seeking opportunities to work with community leaders like you. We are eager to show how we can provide people with accurate and balanced information about the law, helping them develop the skills, attitudes, and values needed to be responsible and participating citizens.

This brochure will tell you about our varied programs and the ways we can help you meet the needs of your community.



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With expertise in law, education, and communication, the ABA Division for Public Education staff will connect you with educators, lawyers, judges, law enforcement officials, and national, state, and local associations that share your concern about the nation's future and want to work with you to help meet your challenges and attain your goals.

A key component of the Division's services is its comprehensive National Resource Center, which collects and distributes information and teaching materials in all areas of law-related education. Available to anyone by telephone, mail, or FAX, the Resource Center's computerized database provides vital researching capabilities to help you develop and maintain your projects.

By calling on the ABA Division for Public Education, you become partners with a nationally recognized leader in all aspects of law-related/civic education and advocacy. Besides developing "best practices" in public education in the law, the Division successfully mobilizes bar and judicial groups to join with their communities in confronting, through education, problems such as violence and substance abuse. We sponsor highly valued national forums on vital topics as well as special events such as Law Day and the ABA's prestigious Gavel Awards.

As a participant in the Division for Public Education's information network, you will gain access to our full array of publications supporting a multitude of law-related educational activities.

One-of-a-kind technical assistance and teacher resource bulletins identify programs and strategies that will work for you. Plain-language analyses of U.S. Supreme Court and other court cases bring important judicial events within your reach to share with your community. Books, videos, computer programs, and newsletters explain practical, everyday legal topics from dispute resolution to consumer law. Accuracy and accessibility are keystones of all the Division's publications and programs.

*"The justice system can be a common bond for a diverse society."*
**—Paul M. Igasaki, Executive Director of the Asian Law Caucus**

*"The Public Education Division of the ABA is providing an invaluable service to the clients of law firms and especially to the general public."*

—Thomas Wolff, Director of Client Services,
Wolff Ardis, P.C., Memphis, Tennessee

# PUTTING the LAW WITHIN EVERYONE'S REACH

**The Division for Public Education will help you save the time and cost of starting a program from scratch. Our abundant services and resources are already in place and ready to serve you. Our staff will help you tap into these resources, working together with you to create the ideal partnership and program for any age group—children, teens, college students, or adults.**

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As a leader in the field of law-related education, the Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship actively promotes partnerships among educators, legal professionals and community leaders. Through a broad range of services, activities, and materials, our Youth Education staff can help you design a program uniquely suited to the needs of young people in your community.

Our annual National Law-Related Education Leadership Seminar—a "must attend" for anyone who aims to know what's happening in law-related education—is the principal national professional development and networking conference for leaders in the field. Each year at the Seminar the ABA recognizes an outstanding youth education leader with the Isidore Starr Award for Excellence in Law-Related Education.

To keep you up-to-date with developments in law and education, our publications are a sure-fire link to relevant research, teacher preparation and program innovation. And by subscribing to *Update on Law-Related Education*—the only national publication devoted to teaching young people about the law—your school and community will have access to the best thinking and curriculum strategies for addressing such current legal/social issues as violence and substance abuse.

Call on our experienced staff to assist you in developing programs that challenge young people to think critically, make thoughtful decisions and provide meaningful service to the community.

***"Of all the social problems we face, I am convinced that none is more important to our country's future than the establishment in the elementary and high schools of an improved program of training in the responsibilities of citizenship."***

**—Leon Jaworski**

*"The [Special] Committee has a long history of providing institutional support for law-related education. [T]he Committee's work played a critical role in the creation of the Michigan Center for Law-Related Education."*

—Linda Start, Executive Director, Michigan Center for Law-Related Education

# HELPING TEACH YOUTH ABOUT RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES

**When kids pick up guns to solve their problems, it's our responsibility to teach them other solutions before they ruin their lives and those of the people around them. Whether as bar leaders, juvenile justice professionals, educators, or community advocates, we all have a major stake in helping young people learn the law's role, what their responsibilities and rights are, and how they can become responsible citizens.**

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Become part of the Law and Legal Studies Network—a multidisciplinary coalition of educators from the United States and around the world. This Network will give you access to conferences, publications, and other activities where you can exchange views and share teaching techniques with other academics who share your challenges and goals.

Our annual conferences for college and university faculty combine scholarly panels with small-group sessions, encouraging the exchange of ideas. Our teaching resource bulletins and special publications such as the semiannual *Focus on Law Studies: Teaching about Law in the Liberal Arts* are a continual source of teaching strategies, book and video reviews, and campus program news.

Each year, our mini-grant program awards up to $1,200 for special projects in various disciplines about the law, the legal system, and the law's role in society—inside and outside the classroom. So far, 50 mini-grants have been made to institutions such as Oregon State University, El Camino Community College, Miami University, Spelman College, Norwich University, and the U.S. Naval Academy.

Today, community colleges account for more than half of all first-year college students. If you are a liberal arts educator in a two-year school, contact us about the programs and services we have in place that address your particular needs.

Whatever your institution or academic area, you can be confident that participating in the Law and Legal Studies Network will give you access to the best practices and materials available in undergraduate legal studies today.

***"Law is not just something to restrain abuses; law is an opportunity . . . to give people the chance to fulfill their potential in life."*** **—Ralph Nader**

*"Your conferences should be cloned. There is no other one where I come away with so much intellectual "stuff." . . . The ABA has given those of us in the liberal arts a very special thing in these conferences."*

—Jill Norgren, CUNY,
John Jay College (Government)

# MAKING IMPORTANT CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

**As an educator, you know that keeping abreast of new teaching strategies and resources is crucial. The Commission on College and University Legal Studies can help keep you in touch with the best undergraduate legal studies programs available anywhere.**

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Think of our staff as your personal resource at every stage of your adult education program. Our team of experts will help you build community partnerships, gain access to exciting learning materials in all formats, and develop a program uniquely suited to your audience's needs. For example, when you're reaching out to people at work sites, use our *Workplace Education Resource Kit*, featuring videos, booklets, and other materials that zero in on the legal topics most adults need to know about. Topics include selling a home, credit and bankruptcy, wills and estates, and, of course, taxes.

Other programs can help you target specific adult populations—ethnic and racial groups, new immigrants, or people with special needs such as those with low reading ability. Our mini-grant program helps libraries, bar associations, community agencies, or other nonprofit organizations initiate law-related adult education efforts. And because adults get most of their legal information from the news media, we produce books and videotapes to help journalists maintain the quality and accuracy of their reporting.

We are your connection to adult educators around the country and the world through our Adult Public Education About the Law network (APEAL). Our quarterly meetings and newsletter will regularly update you.

***"Having language barriers, little understanding of U.S. law and court procedures, and few financial resources, immigrants and refugees face almost insurmountable obstacles to asserting their legal rights."***

**—Llewelyn G. Pritchard,**
**ABA Immigration Project Chair,**
**Seattle, Washington**

*"There is no single . . . strategy that will solve society's problems."* —Lonnie Powers, President of the National Legal Aid and Defenders Association

# LINKING ADULTS to the LAW

**Are you planning an adult law-related community program? Imagine having a connection to legal professionals in your community, access to proven programs and methods developed by top educators, and an immediate source for high-quality educational materials specially designed to benefit your target audience. The Commission on Public Understanding About the Law is available to serve your needs.**

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Coordinated by the Division for Public Education, these annual events support your efforts to educate the public about the law and legal system.

**May 1: Law Day** Each year, through the leadership of the Standing Committee on Association Communications, the ABA establishes a theme and related materials for use in Law Day programs. We also mount a comprehensive media/pubic relations effort, coordinate national events, and sponsor two Law Day awards programs. Law Day USA Public Service Awards go to state and local bar associations for outstanding Law Day programs. The Edward R. Finch Speech Competition acknowledges speeches that best express Law Day's annual theme and goals. Over 200 state and local bar associations join with the ABA to make Law Day a successful event each year.

**The Jaworski Symposium** The eminent Texas lawyer Leon Jaworski served as ABA president in 1971-72 and later as Special Prosecutor in the Watergate investigation. His commitment to fostering public education about the law is honored each year by holding a special symposium in his name to help expand the public's understanding of the law and legal system. The Jaworski symposia give you an opportunity to explore critical legal issues that are vital to your community, while offering effective strategies to assist you in developing the best law-related programs.

**ABA Gavel Awards** Through this program, the Standing Committee on Gavel Awards recognizes media that best foster public understanding of the American legal system and the role of law and legal institutions. Recipients are chosen from newspapers, books, magazines, radio, and television programs, and from films and the theater. They are honored at a special event during the ABA annual meeting.

*"Every citizen should know what law is, how it came into existence, what relation its form bears to its substance, and how it gives society its fibre and strength."*

**—Woodrow Wilson**

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*"Justice is a social issue, not just a legal issue."* —Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, General Secretary of the Council of Churches

# ACHIEVING GREATER IMPACT THROUGH GREATER OUTREACH

**The American Bar Association increases the impact of your public education efforts by sponsoring three annual events—Law Day, the Jaworski Symposium and the ABA Gavel Awards—to generate national interest in public education about the law.**

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The National Resource Center will provide you with facts on current model programs, curricula, print, and multimedia materials for all groups and age levels, plus programs and resources—with reviews that tell you what works best, and why.

Through the Center, you can easily access teacher-training opportunities across the country, as well as the ABA's own surveys on the public education activities of bar associations and courts. Books, pamphlets, periodicals, and technical assistance and teacher resource bulletins are all available to public speakers and program developers.

The National Resource Center is a partner with the Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education (ERIC/ChESS) at Indiana University. ERIC is the largest, most widely used educational database in the world.

Your access to the National Resource Center's database and extensive collections will streamline any program or public outreach effort you undertake. This makes the Center your ultimate—invaluable—resource in all your law-related public education activities.

***"I find Preview of United States Supreme Court Cases useful not only for myself, but for helping my colleagues who do not cover the Court full time to stay on top of the docket."***

**—Linda Greenhouse, *The New York Times***

*"The Resource Center assists my staff and me through accessing the most up-to-date materials, resources and research on every conceivable area of law-related education."*

—Linda Riekes, Unit Director,
Law and Citizenship Education Unit,
St. Louis Public Schools

# THE ULTIMATE RESOURCE

**The ABA Division for Public Education's National Resource Center is one know-it-all you'll be very glad to meet. As the adjunct ERIC clearinghouse for law-related education, the Center is the preeminent source of information and services in public education about the law, collecting and disseminating information, research, and teaching materials worldwide.**

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The ABA Division for Public Education gratefully acknowledges the following organizations for grants and contributions in support of our many program activities:*

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U.S. Department of Education Secretary's Discretionary (Bicentennial) Program
U.S. Department of Justice Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
U.S. Information Agency
West Publishing Company
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# GRANTS and CONTRIBUTORS

**The mission of the ABA Division for Public Education is to promote understanding of law and its role in society.**

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